

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image forming apparatus comprising:  
image forming means for forming an unfixed  
image on a recording material transported thereto,  
5       said image forming means being for continuously  
forming images on recording materials differing in  
width thereof in a direction orthogonal to a  
transport direction thereof;  
fixing means having a heat member and for  
10   fixing the unfixed image by use of heat and pressure;  
and  
recording material changeover means, when  
images are to be continuously formed on recording  
materials smaller in the width thereof in the  
15   direction orthogonal to the transport direction than  
a maximum width with which the recording materials  
are allowed to be passed, for changing over the  
recording materials to recording materials greater in  
the width thereof in the direction orthogonal to the  
20   transport direction than the recording materials on  
which images are being formed during a continuous  
image formation.

2. An image forming apparatus according to  
25   Claim 1, further comprising recording material  
supplying means having at least one recording  
material stacking portion.

3. An image forming apparatus according to  
Claim 1, further comprising recording material  
selecting means for selecting recording materials to  
be supplied from a plurality of recording material  
5 stacking portions, wherein during a changeover of the  
recording material, a recording material is selected  
from said recording material selecting means.

4. An image forming apparatus according to  
10 Claim 1, further comprising size detecting means for  
detecting a size of a selected recording material,  
wherein during a changeover of the recording material,  
a recording material greater in the width thereof in  
the direction orthogonal to the transport direction  
15 than the width of the recording material in the  
direction orthogonal to the transport direction  
before the changeover is selected on the basis of  
said size detecting means.

20 5. An image forming apparatus according to  
Claim 1, further comprising:  
first temperature detecting means for detecting  
a surface temperature of the heat member in a  
position, through which a recording material having a  
25 minimum width in the direction orthogonal to the  
transport direction passes; and  
second temperature detecting means for

detecting a surface temperature of the heat member in a position differing from the position of said first temperature detecting means,

said changeover means being operated on the  
5 basis of said second temperature detecting means.

6. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 5, wherein said changeover means is operated when a difference between the temperature detected by  
10 said first temperature detecting means and the temperature detected by said second temperature detecting means is equal to or greater than a predetermined value.

15 7. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising image rotating means for rotating a forming image orientation, wherein the forming image orientation is rotated through a predetermined angle in association with an operation  
20 of said changeover means.

8. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 7, further comprising image storing means for storing an image to be output, wherein the forming  
25 image orientation of the image stored by said image storing means is rotated through the predetermined angle.

9. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 7, wherein the forming image orientation is rotated through approximately 90 degrees.

5           10. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein in a changing-over operation by said changeover means, the recording material is changed over to a recording material of the same size as the recording material before the changeover rotated  
10 through a predetermined angle with respect to the transport direction.

11. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein the predetermined angle through  
15 which the recording material is rotated is approximately 90 degrees.

12. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising count means for counting  
20 a number of recorded recording materials, wherein an operation of said changeover means is performed on the basis of a count value by said count means.

13. An image forming apparatus according to  
25 Claim 1, comprising recording material re-changeover means for returning the recording material to the recording material before a changing-over operation.

14. An image forming apparatus according to  
Claim 5, comprising recording material re-changeover  
means for returning the recording material to the  
recording material before a changing-over operation,  
5 wherein said recording material re-changeover means  
is operated on the basis of said second temperature  
detecting means.

15. An image forming apparatus according to  
10 Claim 5, comprising recording material re-changeover  
means for returning the recording material to the  
recording material before a changing-over operation,  
wherein said recording material re-changeover means  
is operated when a difference between the temperature  
15 detected by said first temperature detecting means  
and the temperature detected by said second  
temperature detecting means is equal to or smaller  
than a predetermined value.

20 16. An image forming apparatus according to  
Claim 13, further comprising image rotating means for  
rotating a forming image orientation, wherein a  
forming image orientation is rotated through a  
predetermined angle by said image rotating means in  
25 association with an operation of said recording  
material re-changeover means.

17. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 16, further comprising image storing means for storing an image to be output, wherein the forming image orientation of the image stored by said image storing means is rotated through the predetermined angle.

18. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 16, wherein the forming image orientation is rotated through approximately 90 degrees.

19. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 13, wherein in a changing-over operation by said re-changeover means, the recording material is changed over to a recording material of the same size as the recording material before the changeover rotated through a predetermined angle with respect to the transport direction.

20. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 19, wherein the predetermined angle through which the recording material is rotated is approximately 90 degrees.

21. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 13, further comprising count means for counting a number of recorded recording materials, wherein an

operation of said recording material re-changeover means is performed on the basis of a count value by said count means.

5           22. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 2, further comprising recording material detecting means for detecting a presence or absence of recording materials contained in said recording material stacking portion, wherein said recording  
10 material stacking portion in which the presence of the recording materials has been detected by said recording material detecting means is selected.

          23. An image forming apparatus according to  
15 Claim 22, wherein warning is given when said recording material detecting means of the recording material stacking portion to be selected does not detect the presence of the recording materials.

20           24. An image forming apparatus comprising:  
          image forming means for forming an unfixed image on a recording material transported thereto,  
          said image forming means being for forming images on the recording materials differing in width  
25 thereof in a direction orthogonal to a transport direction thereof;

          fixing means having a heat member and for

fixing the unfixed image by use of heat and pressure;

first temperature detecting means for detecting  
a surface temperature of the heat member in a  
position, through which a recording material having a  
5 minimum width in the direction orthogonal to the  
transport direction passes;

second temperature detecting means for  
detecting a surface temperature of the heat member in  
a position differing from the position of said first  
10 temperature detecting means; and

recording material changeover means, when  
images are to be formed on recording materials  
smaller in the width thereof in the direction  
orthogonal to the transport direction than a maximum  
15 width, for changing over the recording materials to  
recording materials greater in the width thereof in  
the direction orthogonal to the transport direction  
than the recording materials on which images are  
being formed, on the basis of said second temperature  
20 detecting means.

25. An image forming apparatus according to  
Claim 24, further comprising recording material  
supplying means having at least one recording  
25 material stacking portion.

26. An image forming apparatus according to



Claim 24, further comprising recording material  
selecting means for selecting recording materials to  
be supplied from a plurality of recording material  
stacking portions, wherein during an operation of  
5 said recording material changeover means, a recording  
material is selected from said recording material  
selecting means.

27. An image forming apparatus according to  
10 Claim 24, further comprising size detecting means for  
detecting a size of a selected recording material,  
wherein during a changeover of the recording material,  
a recording material greater in the width thereof in  
the direction orthogonal to the transport direction  
15 than the width of the recording material in the  
direction orthogonal to the transport direction  
before the changeover is selected on the basis of  
said size detecting means.

20 28. An image forming apparatus according to  
Claim 24, wherein the recording material is changed  
over by said recording material changeover means when  
a difference between the temperature detected by said  
first temperature detecting means and the temperature  
25 detected by said second temperature detecting means  
is equal to or greater than a predetermined value.

29. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 24, further comprising image rotating means for rotating a forming image orientation, wherein the forming image orientation is rotated through a  
5 predetermined angle in association with a changeover of the recording material by said recording material changeover means.

30. An image forming apparatus according to  
10 Claim 29, further comprising image storing means for storing an image to be output, wherein a forming image orientation of a stored image is rotated through the predetermined angle.

15 31. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 29, wherein the forming image orientation is rotated through approximately 90 degrees.

32. An image forming apparatus according to  
20 Claim 24, wherein in a changing-over operation by said changeover means, the recording material is changed over to a recording material of the same size as the recording material before the changeover rotated through a predetermined angle with respect to  
25 the transport direction.

33. An image forming apparatus according to

Claim 32, wherein the predetermined angle through which the recording material is rotated is approximately 90 degrees.

5           34. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 25, further comprising recording material detecting means for detecting a presence or absence of recording materials contained in said recording material stacking portion, wherein said recording  
10 material stacking portion in which the presence of the recording materials has been detected by said recording material detecting means is selected.

          35. An image forming apparatus according to  
15 Claim 34, wherein warning is given when said recording material detecting means of the recording material stacking portion to be selected does not detect the presence of the recording materials.

20           36. An image forming apparatus comprising:  
          image forming means for forming an unfixed image on a recording material transported thereto,  
          said image forming means being for forming images on recording materials differing in width  
25 thereof in a direction orthogonal to a transport direction thereof;

          fixing means having a heat member and for

fixing the unfixed image by use of heat and pressure;

count means for counting a number of recorded  
recording materials; and

recording material changeover means, when  
5 images are to be formed on recording materials  
smaller in the width thereof in the direction  
orthogonal to the transport direction than a maximum  
width, for changing over the recording materials to  
recording materials greater in the width thereof in  
10 the direction orthogonal to the transport direction  
than the recording materials on which images are  
being formed, on the basis of said count means.

37. An image forming apparatus according to  
15 Claim 36, further comprising recording material  
supplying means having at least one recording  
material stacking portion.

38. An image forming apparatus according to  
20 Claim 36, further comprising recording material  
selecting means for selecting recording materials to  
be supplied from a plurality of recording material  
stacking portions, wherein during a changeover of the  
recording material, a recording material is selected  
25 from said recording material selecting means.

39. An image forming apparatus according to

Claim 36, further comprising size detecting means for detecting a size of a selected recording material, wherein during a changeover of the recording material, a recording material greater in the width thereof in  
5 the direction orthogonal to the transport direction than the width of the recording material in the direction orthogonal to the transport direction before the changeover is selected on the basis of said size detecting means.

10

40. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 36, further comprising image rotating means for rotating a forming image orientation, wherein the forming image orientation is rotated through a  
15 predetermined angle in association with a changeover of the recording materials by said recording material changeover means.

41. An image forming apparatus according to  
20 Claim 40, further comprising image storing means for storing an image to be output, wherein the forming image orientation of a stored image is rotated through the predetermined angle.

25 42. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 40, wherein the forming image orientation is rotated through approximately 90 degrees.

43. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 36, wherein in a changing-over operation by said changeover means, the recording material is changed over to a recording material of the same size  
5 as the recording material before the changeover rotated through a predetermined angle with respect to the transport direction.

44. An image forming apparatus according to  
10 Claim 43, wherein the predetermined angle through which the recording material is rotated is approximately 90 degrees.

45. An image forming apparatus according to  
15 Claim 37, further comprising recording material detecting means for detecting a presence or absence of recording materials contained in said recording material stacking portion, wherein said recording material stacking portion in which the presence of  
20 the recording materials has been detected by said recording material detecting means is selected.

46. An image forming apparatus according to Claim 45, wherein warning is given when said  
25 recording material detecting means of the recording material stacking portion to be selected does not detect the presence of the recording materials.